

Martial, III, 1

You invited me to dinner  
for one reason and no other,  
Ligurinus -- to read me your poems.  
I take off my shoes at the table.  
Immediately a huge volume  
is brought in with the salad and canapes.  
Another is read while we wait  
for the first course, and a third  
before our desert is served.  
And you read us a fourth, and finally  
a fifth book. Even boar's meat  
is sickening if you offer it  
to me too often. If you don't  
turn over your awful poems  
to the fishmongers, Ligurinus,  
you'll find yourself eating your dinner  
at home, alone, after this.

Martial, III, lxi

You buy slaves for a hundred  
thousand sesterces apiece,  
or sometimes two. You drink  
wines from King Numa's day.  
A rather small set of furniture  
costs you a million. You're robbed  
of five thousand for a pound  
or so of plated silverware.  
A gilded carriage sets you back  
the price of a farm. And a mule  
costs you more than a house in town.  
Quintus, do you really think  
such extravagance demonstrates  
a liberal mind? Well, you're wrong.  
Only a petty sort of fellow  
would buy such stuff at all.

Martial, III, lxiv

They say crafty Ulysses  
managed to escape the sirens  
with their fatal attraction for sailors  
(death made irresistible,  
joy barbed with cruelty) --  
whom nobody could resist  
once he'd heard them. Well I'm willing